

million child laborers, more than 100 million have never seen the inside of a classroom. An estimated 126 million children are working under the most hazardous circumstances in mines, in fishing operations and on plantations. These children are being robbed of their childhoods. Many are being denied an education. They are deprived of any hope for a brighter future. In the years ahead, they will grow up illiterate and exploited, and this will create a wellspring of future social conflict and strife, and even terrorism.

We have made progress in recent years by increasing funds for programs to rehabilitate child laborers through our contribution to the ILO's International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor. In 2000, I successfully amended the Trade and Development Act with a provision directing that no trade benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences, GSP, will be granted to any country that does not live up to its commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. I required that the President submit a yearly report to Congress on the steps being taken by each GSP beneficiary country to carry out its commitments to end abusive and exploitative child labor.

I want to explain clearly to my colleagues what I mean when I refer to abusive and exploitative child labor. I am not talking about children who work part time after school or on weekends. There is nothing necessarily wrong with that. What I am referring to is the definition set out by ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. This is not just a Western or a developed-world standard; it is a global standard that has been ratified by 163 countries. It was ratified by Peru in 1999. The United States was the third country in the world to ratify this convention.

It is true that we have made some modest progress in including labor protections in this Peru Free Trade Agreement. But we all know that labor protections in trade agreements mean nothing in the absence of political will to enforce them. I am also concerned that, on the very same day that the deal to include new labor provisions in the Peru FTA was announced, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said, "We are encouraged by assurances that the labor provisions cannot be read to require compliance with ILO Conventions." Clearly, this statement sends a powerful message that the labor provisions in the Peru FTA should be ignored.

Under the Peru deal, the only party that can seek enforcement of labor violations in Peru is the U.S. administration. There is no mechanism for an outside party, such as a nongovernmental organization, to bring a complaint, as exists under the GSP. This would actually take us, and the world, a step backward when it comes to protecting children. That is right. This free-trade agreement with Peru, which

replaces GSP provisions in governing trade between our two countries, will take us backward with respect to combating abusive and exploitative child labor.

Under the current U.S. GSP provisions, the President now must report to Congress annually regarding Peru's child labor practices. Under GSP, if Peru is not meeting the obligations that it undertook as a signatory to the ILO Convention 182, if it is not acting to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, then trade sanctions are imposed immediately to require enforcement in Peru of internationally recognized standards. This protects children. It also ensures that our workers will not be subjected to unfair competition from abusive and exploitative labor abroad. Unfortunately, under the Peru Free Trade Agreement, trade sanctions are not automatic.

I remind our colleagues that we voted 96 to 0 to include those protections, which I offered to GSP. It was a Harkin-Helms amendment, and it received unanimous, bipartisan support. None of us wanted to have those child labor protections undercut by our trade negotiators in an agreement with Peru or any other country but that is exactly what has happened. Now, because of fast-track rules which don't allow us to amend this legislation, we won't even be able to vote to restore the GSP protections in this agreement. If we vote for this trade agreement, we are voting to remove the protections that all of us who were here in 2000 voted to put in place.

On the matter of child labor, this Peru Free Trade Agreement takes us in the wrong direction. Abusive and exploitative child labor is wrong as a matter of principle. And it is also wrong as a practical matter. Our workers and our small businesses should not have to compete with abused and exploited child laborers abroad.

I am sorry to say that this is not an academic or rhetorical issue in the case of labor practices in Peru. Peru is far from the worst Government, even in our hemisphere, when it comes to meeting its international obligations to protect children from abusive and exploitative labor. I don't mean to single out Peru. But there is broad agreement among international observers—including our own Department of Labor, the Department of State, UNICEF and the International Labor Organization—that the problem of abusive child labor persists in that country. As many as 1.9 million Peruvian children between the ages of 6 and 17 are working rather than attending schools as they should. There are an estimated 150,000 child laborers in the capital city of Lima alone. The Government of Peru may be seeking to reduce the problem, as it should, but we should not be weakening our sole existing trade mechanism that allows us to monitor its progress. That is not the way forward for free and fair trade. And it is certainly not the way to lift

up the Peruvian economy. Abusive child labor perpetuates the cycle of poverty across generations. No country has achieved broad-based economic prosperity on the backs of working and exploited children.

Mr. President, I appreciate that improvements were made to this agreement thanks to my Democratic colleagues in the House. But this remains a flawed agreement, one that we are not allowed to correct through amendments. I was eager to support an agreement promoting freer trade with Peru, but I cannot support a flawed agreement that takes a step backward from current law.

PASSAGE OF S. 1327

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome the passage of S. 1327, which will reestablish temporary judgeships where needed in the district courts and extend other temporary judgeships that are about to expire.

The bill will reestablish a 10-year temporary judgeship in the Eastern District of California, where it is sorely needed. It will also reestablish a temporary judgeship in Nebraska and extend the terms of existing temporary judgeships in Hawaii, Kansas, and Ohio.

The Eastern District of California had a temporary judgeship from 1992 to 2004. At the end of that period, the caseload in the district was the second-highest in the Nation: 787 filings per judge. That was almost 50 percent more than the national average.

Still, the temporary judgeship expired in the fall of 2004 as required by law. Since then the situation in the Eastern District has grown even more dire. Average caseloads across the Nation have declined, but in the Eastern District they have increased by 18 percent.

The most recent statistics show that the Eastern District of California has the highest caseload in the country: 927 filings per judge. That is twice as many cases as the national average.

It is no exaggeration to say that the judges of the Eastern District are in desperate need of relief. They have continued to serve with distinction in the face of the crushing caseloads. Two of the court's senior judges still carry full caseloads after taking senior status. Two other senior judges are also continuing to hear cases.

In recent months, the caseload has become even more crushing with the departure of chief judge David Levi. He stepped down from the bench after 17 years of service to become the dean of the Duke University School of Law.

It is clear that the Eastern District of California needs our help to ensure that cases continue to be handled with the care, attention, and promptness that are essential to the fair administration of justice. Reestablishing the expired temporary judgeship is one way to help.

This bill is also a crucial first step toward getting California all of the

judges it needs. According to the 2007 recommendations of the Judicial Conference of the United States, California needs a total of 12 new judges—more judges than are needed in any other State in the Nation. Four of those judges are needed in the Eastern District. By adding a temporary judgeship in the Eastern District, this bill will begin to meet that need.

I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this bill and pleased that the Senate has passed it.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today I am pleased to recognize the United Nations International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development, IVD. I strongly support international volunteering because of the mutual personal and cultural benefits it yields to both those who volunteer and those who benefit from volunteer efforts. Volunteering is one of the more meaningful ways for us to address very significant needs and develop a common understanding throughout our interconnected world.

Volunteering overseas regularly changes perspectives for the better. My constituents often share their stories about these international experiences, and I am always pleased to hear them talk about how it broadened their understanding and deepened their compassion for other cultures. Today, some of the greatest threats to our national security are based on, or feed upon, a false impression of who the American people are and what we care about. To reverse these erroneous impressions we need to share and make clear the qualities of empathy and kindness that are central to our heritage. American volunteerism abroad is not only a simple act of benevolence—an effort to improve the lives of others—but it is also one of our best resources to create greater, more meaningful interaction and common points of reference and to build strong relationships throughout the world.

Claudia from Milwaukee wrote me recently about her first international volunteer experience. She said, “I have always had a desire to travel and explore. . . . Most recently, I had the opportunity to volunteer internationally with Cross-Cultural Solutions in Lima, Peru . . . which brought out every emotion we have. While in Lima, I worked with the elderly of Villa El Salvador, many of whom are abused, neglected and in poor health. Villa El Salvador, which is outside of Lima, is a shantytown built on the sand dunes in 1970. The warmth and love felt from the people was unbelievable. I also had the opportunity to participate in home visits. Seeing how people live with very little, most with only one or two rooms, many with dirt floors and some having no indoor plumbing, makes me realize that it's not the possessions we have in life but life itself. . . . We are one world, one planet. We do need to share it as one.”

I believe every American should have the opportunity to volunteer overseas and experience firsthand, like Claudia, how crucial this kind of assistance is to building meaningful personal understanding and international relationships as well as contributing to the development of nations. For this reason, I introduced the Global Service Fellowship Act, S. 1464, which creates an international volunteer program designed to provide more opportunities for people-to-people engagement. The bill reduces two key barriers that Americans face when volunteering overseas—cost and time limitations. First, the Global Service Fellowship Act reduces financial barriers by awarding fellowships that can be applied towards airfare, housing, or program costs, to name a few examples. By providing financial assistance, the Global Service Fellowship Program opens the door for every American to be a program participant—not just those with the resources to pay for it.

Second, this bill offers flexibility in the length of time for which an individual can volunteer. I often hear from constituents who do not seek opportunities to participate in Federal volunteer programs because they cannot leave their jobs or family for years at a time. The Global Service Fellowship Program provides a commonsense approach to the time constraints of many Americans who seek volunteer opportunities by offering a timeframe that works for them—from a month up to a year.

My bill would broaden the spectrum of Federal volunteer opportunities already made available by our Government. Given the increasingly negative perception of the United States overseas, we need more support for international volunteerism now more than ever. My constituents who engage in such opportunities are proof of how we can both inform ourselves of the needs and nature of our foreign neighbors and also directly change attitudes about the United States for the better.

For these reasons, today marks a special day for me and, in particular, for my constituents who have shared with me their stories of hope and fulfillment from their international experiences. It is my wish that all of us will have these types of experiences and that this day will remind us of—and encourage us to participate in—the very meaningful opportunities and benefits offered by international volunteer initiatives.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ED SHINODA

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I would like to commend Ed Shinoda for receiving the Organization of Chinese Americans', OCA, Asia Pacific American Corporate Achievement Award. October 19, 2007, he was recognized in Las Vegas, NV, for his work at the

United States Parcel Service, UPS, as a Pacific region manager. He has been at UPS since 1975, where he started as a part-time loader.

The OCA was founded in 1973 to advance the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans. With 50 chapters across the Nation, including one in Hawaii, OCA helps citizens achieve their aspirations and improve their lives. The organization also facilitates the development of leadership and involvement in the community.

The Asia Pacific American Corporate Achievement Award was given to twelve individuals this year. This national program recognizes the achievements of Asian Pacific Americans in the corporate world, and their service to the community. Those honored were nominated by their employers, and then selected by a panel of judges.

Ed is currently the UPS Hawaii Operations Manager and is responsible for all UPS operations in Hawaii. Throughout his time at UPS, Ed has served in various leadership positions and is now one of the highest ranking Asian Pacific Americans at UPS. Ed not only works hard at UPS, but also in the community. He has participated in programs such as Neighbor-to-Neighbor, Global Volunteer Week, and the United Way campaign.

In addition to working hard and being involved in the community, Ed also supports fellow Asian Pacific American communities. He has served in organizations such as the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce, the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, and the Hong Kong Business Association. He helped found “A Safe Place,” an organization which works with children whose parents have been incarcerated. Ed is a hard-working individual, and I wish him and his family a warm aloha and best wishes.●

HALEIWA SUPER MARKET CENTENNIAL

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Haleiwa Super Market of Haleiwa, HI, on celebrating its 100-year anniversary. The store was opened by Kasaku Sakai, a Japanese plantation contract worker, and has since been run by four generations of the Sakai family.

Since opening in 1907, the store has expanded from a small grocery store to a full service supermarket. The business has changed locations several times in order to accommodate the store's increasing size. It has provided the residents of Haleiwa town with an invaluable resource throughout its many years. For example, during WWII, the store operated by credit, and its customers were not required to pay interest on their outstanding balances. Debts were often forgiven for families that were unable to pay. Now, both tourists and locals stroll the aisles of the Haleiwa Super Market for its fresh